

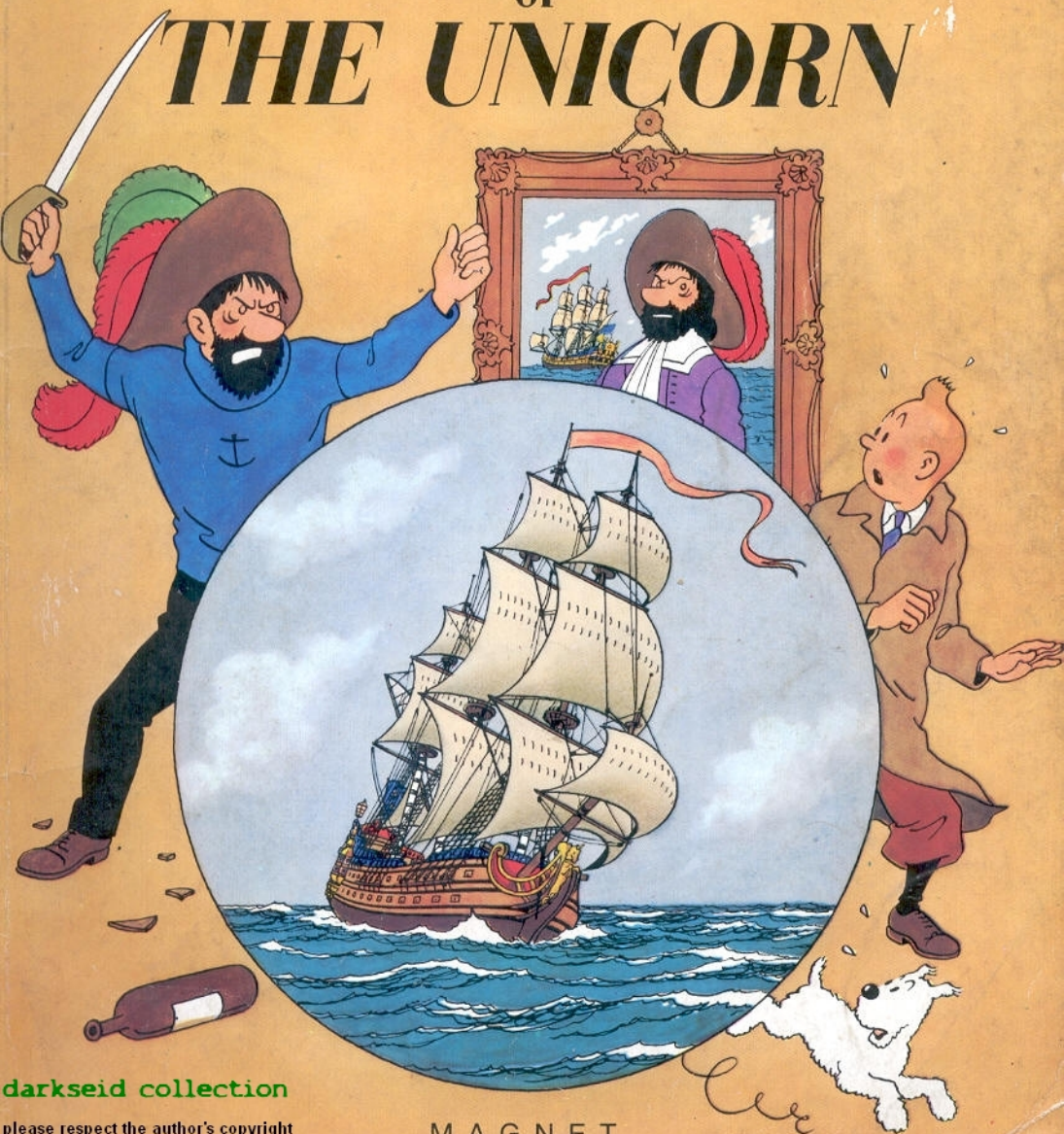
HERGÉ

THE ADVENTURES OF

TINTIN

\*

# THE SECRET OF THE UNICORN



darkseid collection

please respect the author's copyright  
and purchase a legal copy of this book

MAGNET



# THE SECRET OF THE UNICORN



## NEWS IN BRIEF

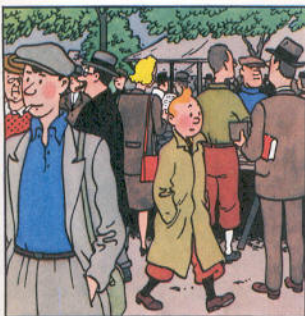
**A**N alarming rise in the number of robberies has been reported in the past few weeks. Daring pickpockets are operating in the larger stores, the cinemas and street markets. A well-organised gang is believed to be at work. The police are using their best men to put a stop to this public scandal.

We must keep our eyes open, and catch these crooks.

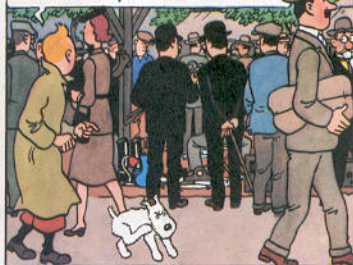


How about starting in the Old Street Market? Tintin said he was going there this morning. Perhaps we'll meet him.

Good idea. Let's go.



Why, there are Thomson and Thompson.



Hello! ... How are you?

Look who's here!

Tintin!



What are you doing here? Looking for bargains? Sh!... Highly confidential!... Special operation: pickpockets.

But that didn't stop us from finding this job-lot of walking sticks.



How much?

Eight bob for the lot.



Six shillings.

Seven...but I'm robbin' meself...



See? You've always got to haggle a bit, here.



My wallet's been stolen!



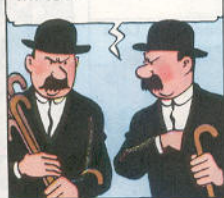
But that's absurd!... You must have left it at home... or perhaps you've lost it?



Here, you hold these sticks. I'll pay.



Just the sort of thing that would happen to you!... To go and let someone pinch your wallet!



?



Mine's gone too!



Here, let me pay for them.

Thanks very much, Tintin. We'll pay you back tomorrow.



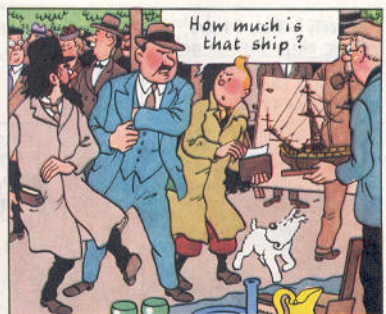
There.



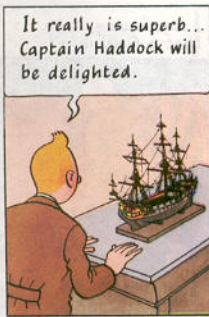
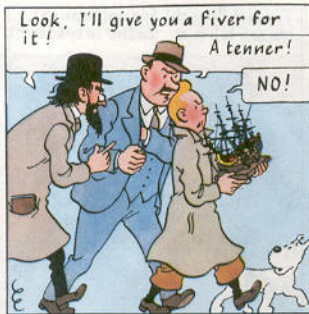
Goodbye! We're going to report this straight away...

















Here we are! Now ...



You'll see ...



Look !



Is ...  
is that  
you? ...



No, it's one of my  
ancestors, Sir  
Francis Haddock.  
He lived in the  
reign of Charles  
the Second.

But just take a closer look  
at that ship in the back-  
ground ...



It's just like the one you  
saw in my room, isn't it?

Exactly!... It's the same  
ship!... It's identical!...  
Don't you think that's  
remarkable?



There's a name here. Look  
there, in tiny letters :  
**UNICORN**

So there is: **UNICORN**.  
I'd never noticed it.



Maybe there's a  
name on mine too...  
We should have  
brought it along.  
Wait here: I'll go  
and fetch it.

If mine has the  
same name, that'll  
really be funny...



Let's see ...



Great snakes!... It's gone!





RRRRING...  
RRRRING...  
RRRRING...



Hello?... Yes... Ah, it's you... Well, has your ship got the same name?... What did you say?... It's been stolen?



Yes, stolen!... Do I suspect anybody? No one at all... at least... Look Captain, I'll ring you again later...



Yes... he's the only possibility...



IVAN IVANOVITCH  
SAKHARINE  
Collector  
21, Eucalyptus Avenue



Just you wait, Mr. Ivan Ivanovitch Sakharine!



Here we are...



I've a hunch that we're off on one of our adventures again...

RRRING



Something tells me he's going to get a surprise when he opens the door!



Ah, there you are!... Come in... I was expecting you.



What?... Expecting me?... Then you know why I've come.



But of course...

You've come to tell me that you'll sell your ship after all...

Certainly not!



Not?... Then I don't understand...



Is this where you keep your collection?... I've come to tell you, sir... that my ship has been stolen...

... and that I'm waiting for you to explain how it comes to be here!





You are mistaken, young man. I've had this ship for more than ten years!...

Ten years? But you were trying to buy it from me less than two hours ago!



This wasn't the ship!... Not this one!... Yours was, in fact, exactly the same, but it wasn't this one!

Indeed?...

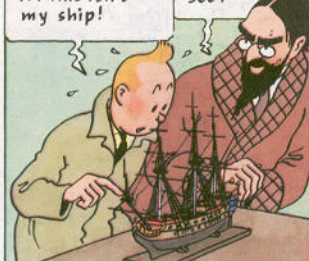


Well, sir, we can soon tell. Just after you'd gone, my ship fell over and the main-mast was broken. I put it back, but you can see where it broke. So we'll look at your mainmast, if you don't mind!

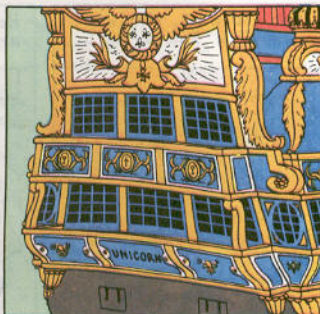


It's not broken! ... This isn't my ship!

So, you see!



I can understand your surprise. I myself was amazed to find an exact replica of my own vessel in the Old Street Market. And because it seemed so odd, I did all I could to persuade you to part with it...



Please do forgive me, sir... I am so very sorry...

That's all right! And if you find your ship, let me know.



It's extremely odd! Two ships exactly like the one in the Captain's picture... and with the same name: UNICORN.



I must telephone the Captain at once! He'll be amazed!



Engaged!



It really is unbelievable how long people can chatter on the telephone! More than a quarter of an hour! Ah, at last!



We can go now, Fifi: it has stopped raining.







My door's open! ... What can be the matter now? ...



My Flat has been ransacked! ...



The gangsters! What have they done to my books?



This one is completely ruined! ... The vandals!



Burgled twice in one day ... Not bad at all!



What have they taken this time?



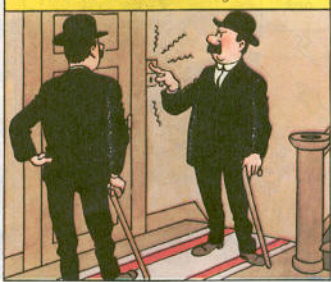
Very queer thieves: they haven't taken a thing.



They've only searched the place... I wonder what they were looking for? ...



*Next morning ...*





Hello, How are you?...  
Good heavens! Whatever's  
happened?



Er... nothing really... just a  
little spot of bother, in the Old  
Street  
Market..

Er... yes... a slight mis-  
understanding. Anyway,  
we've come to pay you  
the money for those  
sticks. We called last  
night, but you were  
out.



Did you get your  
wallet back  
all right?



I'm afraid not.  
But I bought a  
new one this  
morning, and  
... and...



Goodness gracious! I've  
been robbed again!



Great Scotland Yard!... That man  
we met last night on the stairs,  
on our way here!... I remember  
now: he bumped into me!...

What was  
he like?

He bumped  
into me,  
too!



Quite tall... coarse features  
... black hair... small black  
moustache... blue suit...  
brown hat...

That's him... the man  
from the Old Street  
Market!

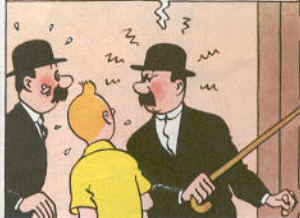


But he couldn't have stolen your  
wallet last night, when you  
only bought it this morning.

There's something  
in what you say...



Miserable thieves! A brand  
new wallet! Come along,  
Thomson, we must report this  
right away!



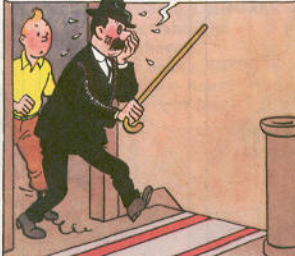
He's right!... We must report  
it at once...



Look  
out!



Hey, Thomson, wait for me.  
Where are you?...



Here!... I'm downstairs already!



Poor old Thomsons, they do have rotten luck!... There seems to be quite an epidemic of larceny and house-breaking.



Oh well, let's try and get these papers sorted out...



What are you after, Snowy?



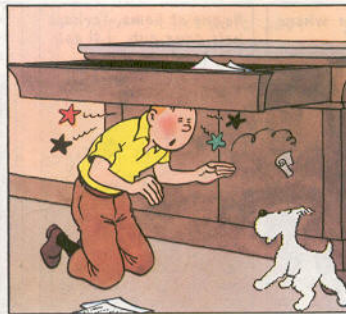
A cigarette, under there? That's a funny place...



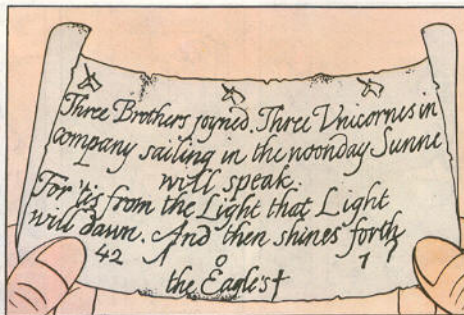
Why, it's not a cigarette... it's a little scroll of parchment...



But this isn't mine! Where ever did it come from?... Let's have a closer look at it...



Here's another mystery!



But it's all gibberish! And where on earth did this parchment come from, anyway?





Great snakes! I've got it... This parchment must have been rolled up inside the mast of the ship. It fell out when the mast was broken, and it rolled under the chest...

And that explains something else! ... Whoever stole my ship knew that the parchment was hidden there. When he discovered the scroll had gone, he thought I must have found it. That's why the thief came back and searched my flat, never guessing the parchment was under the chest...

But why was he so anxious to get hold of it? If only it made some sense... then at least...

I wonder... But... of course! ... That must be it! There's no other answer.

Tintin, you're a real Sherlock Holmes!

Quick, Snowy!... We must see the Captain.

Why? What is it now?

Treasure, Snowy!... Come on, this is going to be a treasure-hunt!

RRRRING  
RRRRING  
RRRRING  
HADDOCK

Yes, I'm absolutely certain it must be treasure...

The old lazybones! He's still in bed!

No?... then where can he be?

No one at home. Perhaps he's gone out. I'll ask his land-lady...

Captain Haddock?... No, I didn't see him go out. Hasn't he answered the bell? That's funny...

Perhaps he's ill?

Ill? He might be... His light's been on all night...

We must find out at once.

No answer?... Wait!... He must be in. I can hear a noise...

RRRRRRING

Captain!... Captain! Open the door!... It's me... Tintin...



Not a sound...



Still no answer...



Come one pace nearer and I'll blast you to blazes!



Shall I go for the police?



I think... yes, he's talking to himself! This is getting serious!...



Ah, here comes the locksmith.



Got it?...



Nope... can't do it, guv'. The door's bolted...



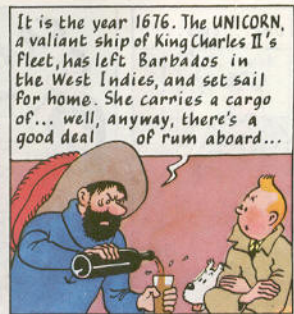
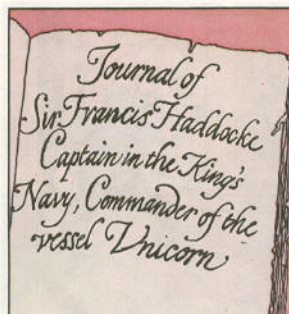
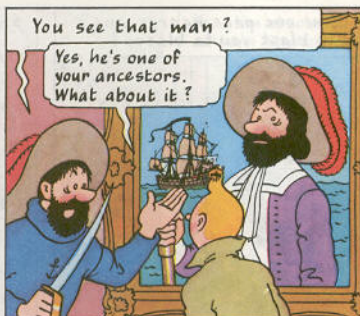
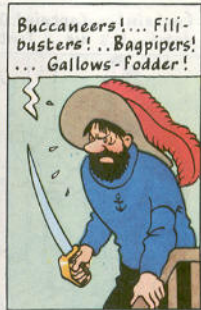
We must force the door. I'll be responsible for the damage...

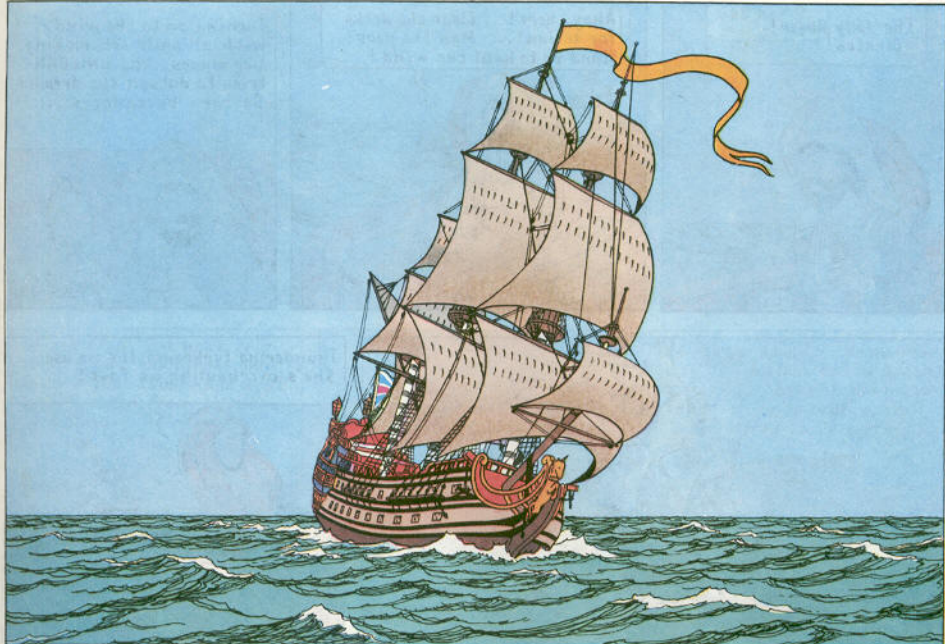


One... two...





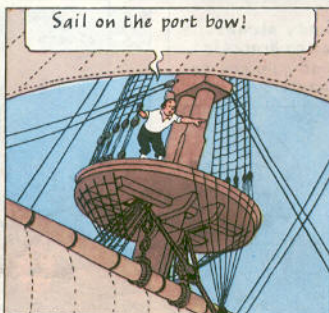




Two days at sea, a good stiff breeze, and the UNICORN is reaching on the starboard tack. Suddenly there's a hail aloft...



Sail on the port bow!



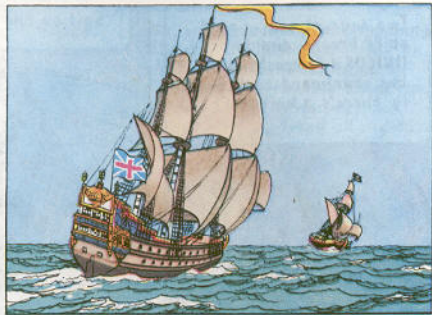
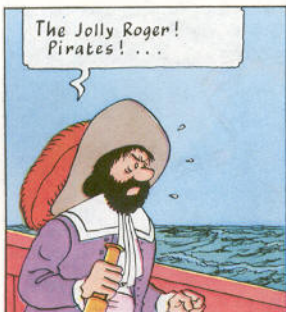
Thundering typhoons!.. She's mighty close-hauled! Ration my rum if she's not going to cut across our bows!



And she's making a spanking pace! Oho! she's running up her colours.. Now we'll see...

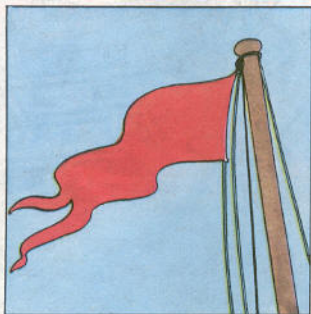








Got her, yes! But not a crippling blow. The pirate ship in turn goes about - and look! she's hoisted fresh colours to the mast-head!



The red pennant!... No quarter given!... A fight to the death, no prisoners taken! You understand? If we're beaten, then it's every man to Davy Jones's locker!



The pirates take up the chase - they draw closer... and closer... Throats are dry aboard the UNICORN.



Close hauled, the enemy falls in line astern with UNICORN, avoiding the fire of her guns... She draws closer...



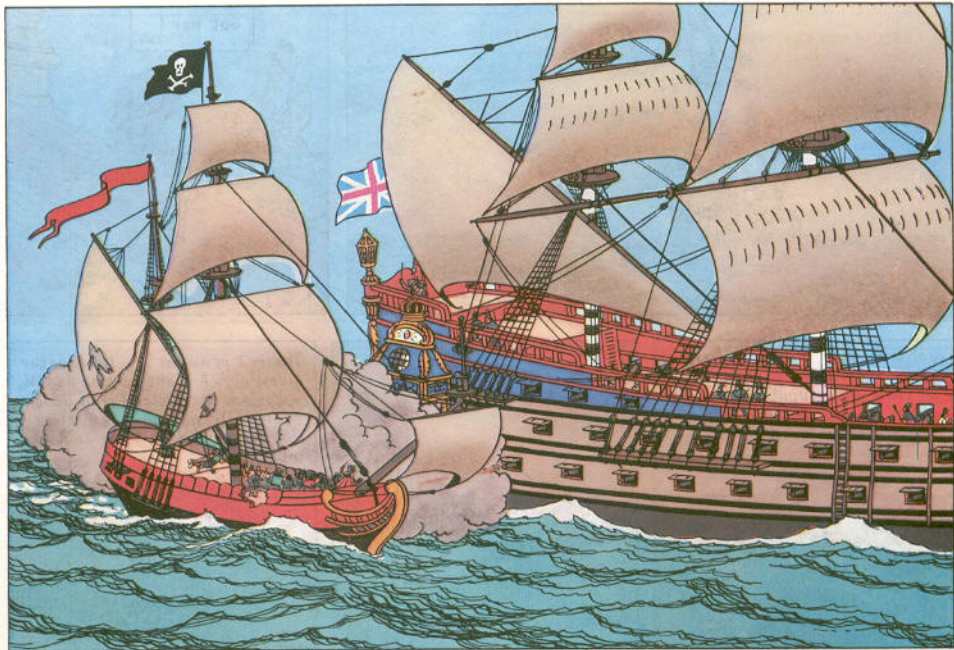
Then suddenly, not more than half a cable's length away, she slips from under the UNICORN's poop... whoosh, like that!



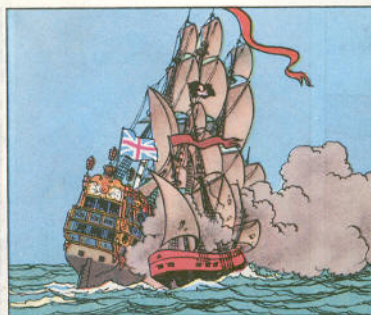
Then she resumes her course. The two ships are now alongside. The boarders prepare for action...







Here they come ! Grap-  
pling irons are hurled  
from the enemy ship.  
With hideous yells the  
pirates stream aboard  
the **UNICORN**.



All hands to — repel board-  
ers !







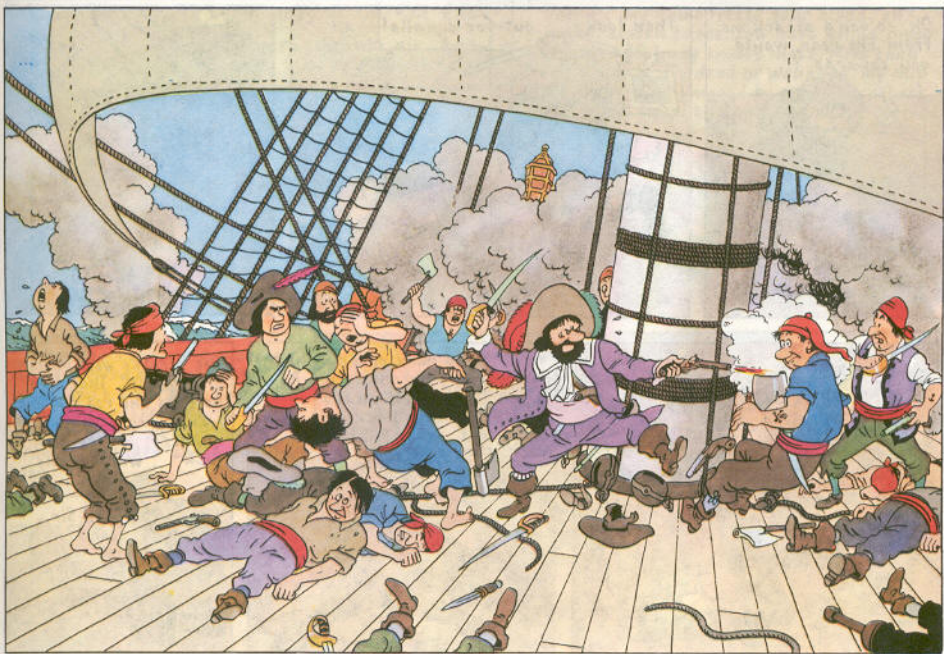
Stand back! Out of my way!  
Can't you see the pirates swarming  
over the side!



Back, you dogs!



Back, you rats! Avast, sea-  
lice!  
Belay, lubberly scum!









Sir Francis? ... When he came round he found himself securely lashed to his own mast. He suffered terribly ...

From that blow on the head, of course ...



No, from thirst! ...



Poor man, how he suffered.



He looked about him. The deck was scrubbed, and no trace remained of the fearful combat that had taken place there. The pirates passed to and fro, each with a different load ...



What's happening? Instead of pillaging our ship and making off with the booty, they're doing just the opposite.



But there's a man approaching. He wears a crimson cloak, embroidered with a skull: he's the pirate chief! He comes near - his breath reeks of rum - and he says:



Regard me ham!

well, dog: I am Red Rack-



Your servant, sir. And I am Sir Francis Haddock.

Doesn't my name freeze your blood, eh? Right. Listen to me. You have killed Diego the Dreadful, my trusty mate. More than half my crew are dead or wounded. My ship is foundering, damaged by your first attack, then holed below the waterline as we boarded you ...



...when some of your dastardly gunners fired at point blank range. She's sinking ... so my men are transferring to this ship the booty we captured from a Spaniard three days ago.



And what booty!



Look at these diamonds!





These are worth more than six times a king's ransom ...

Did you come here just to tell me that?



No, that's not why I came. I came to tell you that those who annoy me pay dearly for their folly! Tomorrow morning I shall hand you over to my crew. And that flock of lambs know just administering how to tera lin-death!



So saying, he laughed sardonically, picked up his glass and drained it at a gulp, like this...



That's enough, Captain! Go on with your story...



Very well. Towards nightfall, the UNICORN with her pirate crew sighted a small island. Soon she dropped anchor in a sheltered cove...



Darkness fell; the pirates found the UNICORN's cargo of rum, broached the casks, and made themselves abominably drunk...



Abominably!... Yes abominably... that's the word



Hey, what's the idea?... I only wanted to show you...

You don't have to, I quite understand.



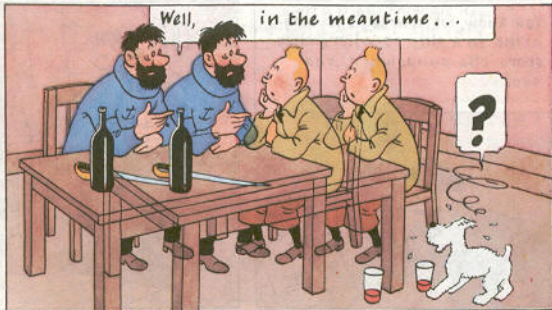
Just as you like, Tintin... Now where was I?

The pirates were abominably drunk...



AAAAA-AAAAH!







You know, of course, the magazine in a ship is where they store the gunpowder and shot...



There!... The party won't be complete without some fireworks!



Now I must make haste! There's just time for me to leave the ship before she goes up!



So, I've caught you!



So, dog, high! have I'll be-

you'd blow us sky-high! Well, you won't have that pleasure! skin you alive, fore I even douse that fuse!



By Lucifer! I'll shave your beard, porcupine!

And I'll pluck those feathers, squawking popinjay! Fancy-dress freebooter! Fresh water pirate! Pithecanthropus!



Retreat as you may, you cannot escape me!

I'll run you through, prattling porpoise!





And as he fought, Sir Francis kept thinking of that fuse, about to touch off the powder at any moment



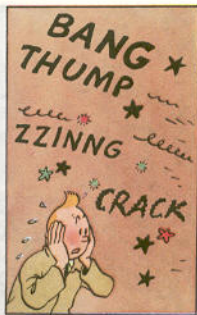
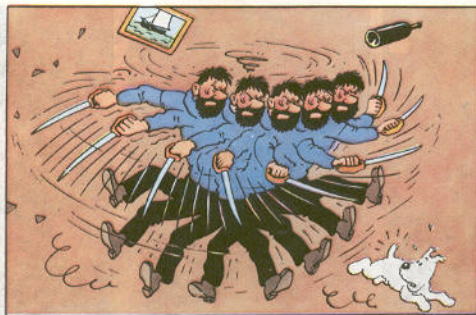
Suddenly, nimbly parrying a thrust, he leapt to one side...



With one swift blow from his heel he extinguished the fuse!



Now, Red Rackham, my temper's rising!



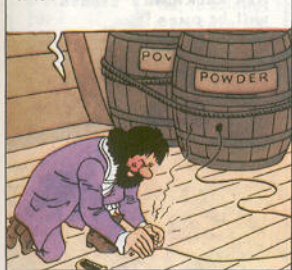
Victory! Red Rackham lies dead! With a yo-ho-ho and a bottle of rum!



That's that! May heaven forgive your wicked soul!



Enough delay! Now to light another Fuse...



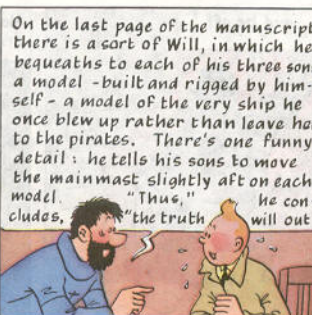
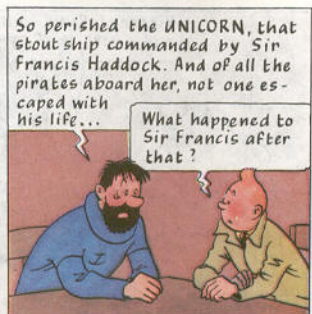
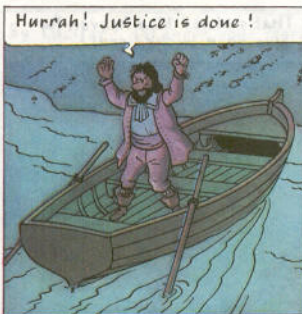
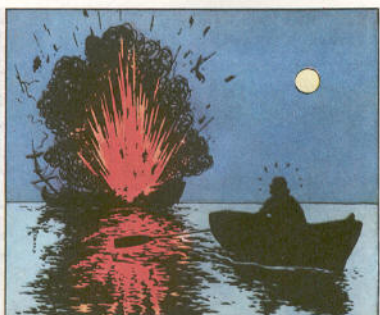
...and be off!



No one has seen me: they're still drinking. Quick, into the jolly-boat...







What do you mean?

Why do you suppose Sir Francis told his sons to move the mainmast on each of the three ships?



How should I know? He must have been a very particular man, and wanted the ships to be perfect!

In that case, he would have moved the masts himself. Why did he tell his sons to do it?



Because if his sons had obeyed him, they would have found a tiny scroll of parchment inside each mast!



What's that? How do you know?

Because I myself found the parchment hidden in the ship I bought in the Old Street Market. Here it is...



My wallet! ... Someone's stolen my wallet...



Stolen it? You've probably left it at home.

No, it's been stolen. It was taken in the bus, on my way here. I remember being jostled...



What was on the parchment?

Wait... er... yes: *Three brothers joined - that's the three sons. Three Unicorns in company sailing in the noon-day Sunne will speak - that means we must get the three ships to deliver their secret: the three parchments. The rest isn't so easy...*



*For 'tis from light that light will dawn. And then shines forth... and then some numbers, and at the end, a little cross follows the words the Eagles... that's all.*

But what can it mean?



I don't know yet, but I'm sure that if we can collect the three scrolls together, then we shall find Red Rackham's diamonds. I already know where the second one is. Come on, Captain!



You know where the second scroll is?

Yes, I know who's got the second UNICORN.



The second UNICORN built by my ancestor?

Yes, it belongs to a certain Mr. Sak-harine.



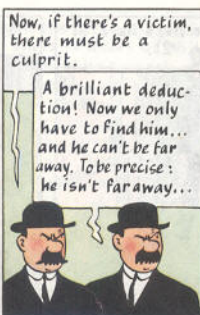
This is it: he lives here, at Number 21.



HELP!.. HELP!.. HELP!..



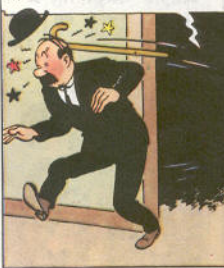




Me, the culprit? You dare accuse me?... Miserable earth-worms!... Sea-gherkins!



Slave-traders!... Sea-lice!... Black-beetles!... Baboons!



Artichokes!... Vermicellis!... Phylloxera!... Pyrographers!



Crab-apples!... Goosecaps!... Gogglers!... Jelly-fish!



Captain! Captain! Calm yourself!

Yes, please calm yourself, Captain. We only said that by way of an experiment...

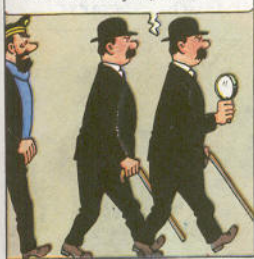


What sort of experiment?

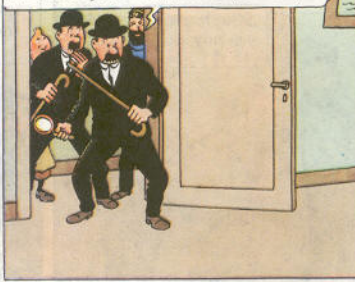
You see, if you really had been guilty, you'd have been upset. As it is, we are now quite convinced of your innocence.



Now, to work! We must look for fingerprints.



Goodness gracious!...The corpse has gone!



Look!...Your corpse is coming round!



What happened to you, Mr Sakharine?



A man came here last night, to offer me some fine old engravings. As I bent over to look at them I felt a pad clamped over my nose...

No doubt it was chloroform, for I became unconscious...



Very odd... To be precise... Can you smell something burning?





Your magnifying-glass! Ha! ha!  
ha!... your magnifying-glass...  
and the sun!... Ha! ha! ha!



Stop laughing in that  
stupid way! Try to  
concentrate on the  
case.



Can you describe the man  
who came to offer you  
those engravings?

Wait... I seem to  
have seen him before  
... but I can't  
tell where...



He was rather fat. Black hair,  
and a little black moustache. He  
wore a blue suit, and a brown  
hat.

That's him!... That's the  
man in the Old  
Street Market!



What man in the Old Street Market?

A man who tried to buy the  
ship I found in the Old Street  
Market. You know him too:  
he's the one you met on the  
stairs on your way to see  
me last night. You suspec-  
ted him of stealing  
your wallet...



By the way, do you know mine  
has been stolen too?...

No! It's extraordinary how  
many people let their wallets  
be stolen! It's so easy not  
to... Here, you try and  
take mine...



Go on, try!...



It's on elastic!

Simple enough... If  
you only think  
of it!



Childishly simple, in fact. But  
now we must leave you to your  
investigations. Goodbye...

Goodbye.



If things go on like this, Red  
Rackham's treasure will disappear  
from under  
our noses...

Yes, I'm afraid  
so...



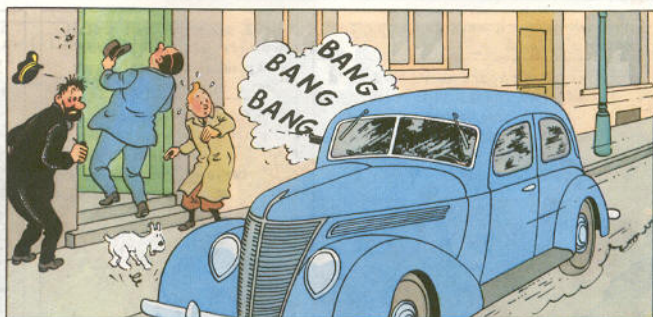
Look, someone seems to be  
waiting for us outside my  
door...



The man from the  
Old Street Market!

Mr. Tintin?...







Next morning...

# SHOOTING DRAMA

AN unknown man was shot dead in Labrador Road just before midday yesterday. As he was about to enter No. 26, three shots were fired from a passing car which had slowed down opposite him. The victim was struck by all three bullets in the region of the heart. He died without regaining consciousness.

Poor devil. No one will ever know what he meant when he pointed to those sparrows.



Hello, Captain! Come in... I'm just telephoning the hospital for news of the wounded man...

It's no good: he's dead.



Hello?... Is that the House-Surgeon? This is Tintin... Good-morning, Doctor. How's our injured man? Just the same? Still unconscious?... Is there any hope? A little... yes... Thank you. Goodbye.



But look here: it says in the paper that he's dead.

Yes, the papers were told he'd died. The crooks will believe he didn't give them away, so they won't be on their guard, and they'll get caught one day.



Ah, I see now. But I still wonder what that poor chap meant, pointing at those sparrows...

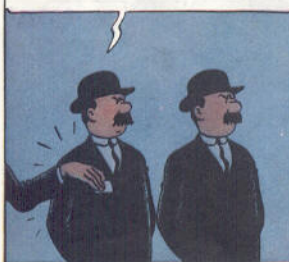
So do I, Captain. It's all very mysterious. "To be precise: very mysterious", as the Thomsons would say.



Another day watching for pickpockets all over the place. I'll be glad to get back home.



Here comes our bus at last!

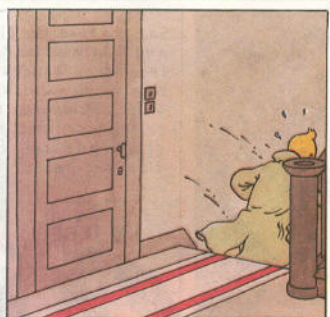


My wallet!... This time I've got you, you scoundrel!



Stop, villain!









Some days later ...



Mr. Tintin ?

The first floor.



All right ?

O.K., OK.



Mr. Tintin ? Here's the dinner service you ordered.

Me ? I haven't ordered anything.



But it's addressed to you ... Look ...

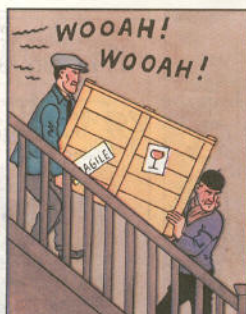


Right ! the chloroform's done the trick. Quick, shove him in the crate.

Wait : I'll shut the door.



WOOAH !  
WOOAH !

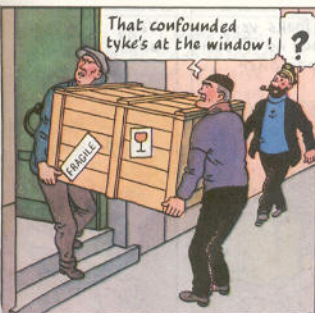


Wasn't Mr. Tintin in ?

Yes, but there's some mistake. He hadn't ordered anything.



That confounded tyke's at the window !

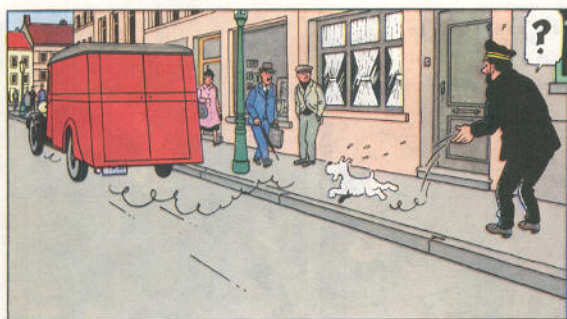


WOOAH !  
WOOAH !



Hello, Snowy ! What's the matter ?





Nobody there! But I wasn't dreaming: someone spoke!



Yes, someone spoke!



Who... who are you?... And where are you?



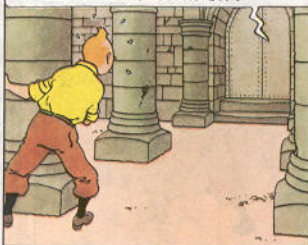
Who am I? I am the ghost of the captain of the UNICORN!



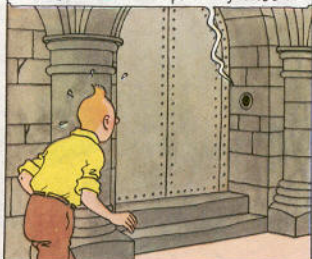
Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!



Ha! ha! ha!... That frightened you, didn't it?... Come over to the door... Come on.



Come nearer. Good... Now, can you see the speaking-tube?



Who are you, and what do you want with me?

Who am I?... You must allow me to remain anonymous... And why did I have you kidnapped? You have guessed that, no doubt...



I want to know where you have hidden the two parchments you stole from me.

Me? I stole two parchments?... But I never had more than one.



Come on now, let's be sensible! I'd collected two of the three scrolls: you took them from me. That night when I had your flat searched, only the third one was found... in your wallet. Where are the other two?

How should I know?

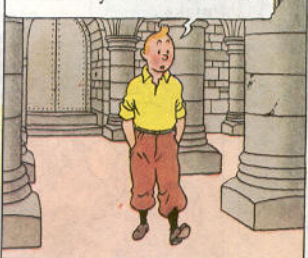


As you like. But I warn you: I know of several ways to loosen stubborn tongues... I'll give you two hours to tell me where you hid those scrolls, then if you won't talk, you'll soon see the sort of man I am!

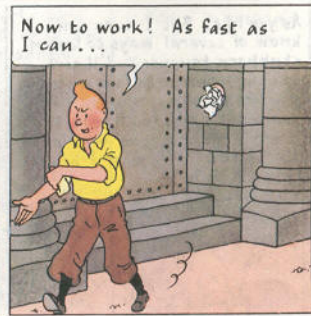
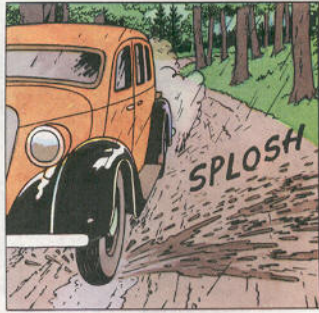
But I tell you... Oh he's cut off, the gangster!



Now I'm in a fine mess! How do I get out of this one?









First I'll knot these sheets and blankets together...



Then tie them securely to this beam...



And pull!... Heave-ho!... Heave-ho!... Heave-ho!... Heave!...



Start again: I've simply got to move this beam. Now...



Meanwhile...



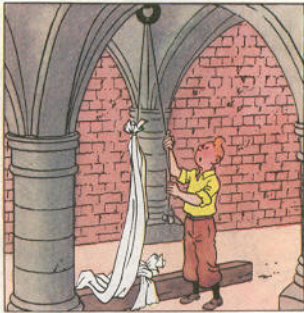
A quick bath and I'll soon get rid of this mud.



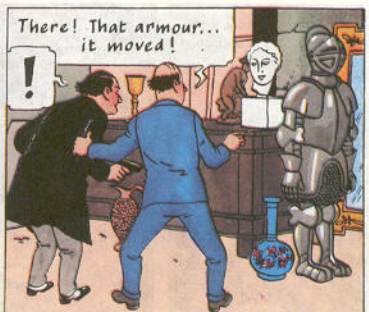
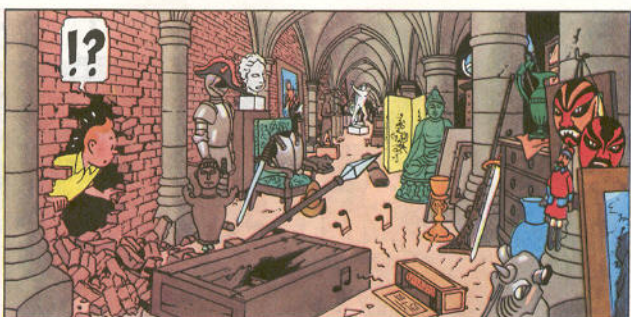
Aha! It's good to be nice and clean again.



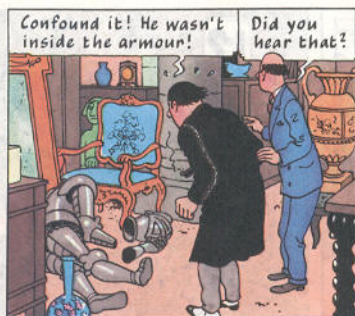
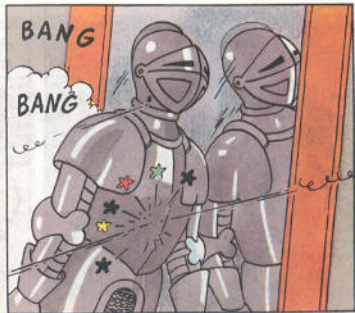
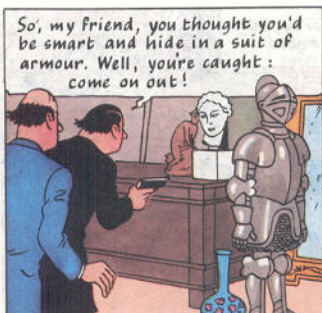




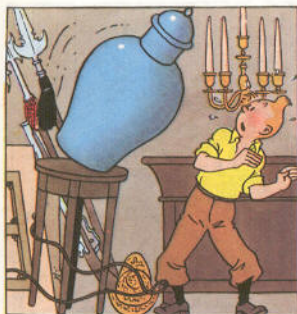












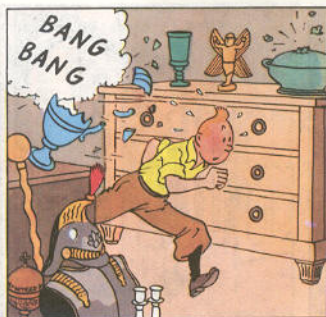
This time it's Tintin... We've got him now.



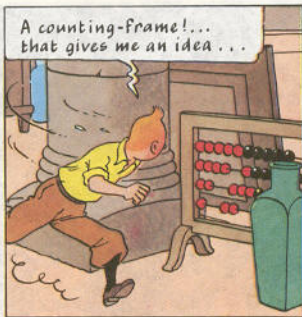
He can't be far off...



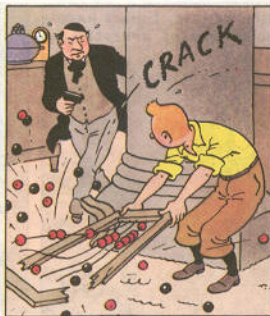
There he is!... Stop!... Stop!... or I'll shoot!



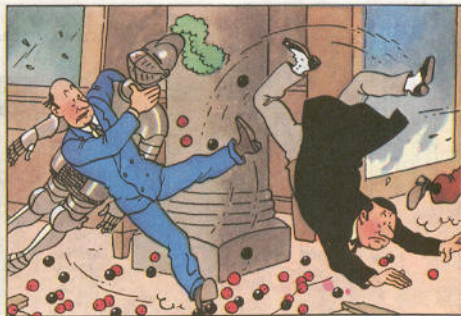
BANG  
BANG



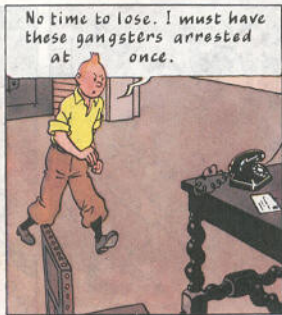
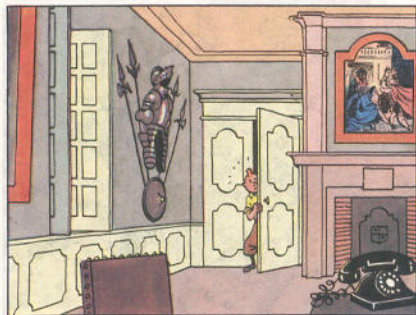
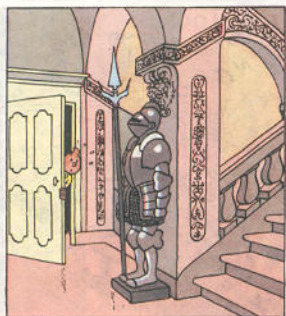
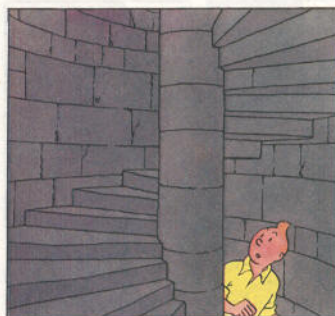
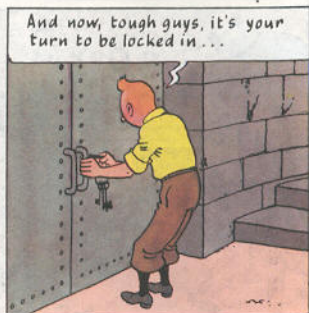
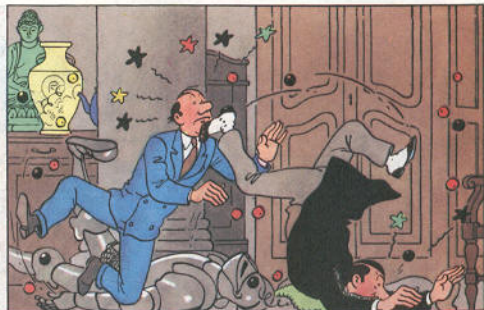
A counting-frame!...  
that gives me an idea...



CRACK







Now I see what he meant-  
the man who was shot-  
pointing to the birds.  
He was giving us the  
name of his attackers!  
... Just look at this  
letter...



Quick, let's ring up the  
Captain...



Hello... yes... it's me... yes...  
Who's speaking? What?  
Tintin!... I... Where are  
you? Hello?... Hello?...  
Hello?... Hello?... Are you  
there?...



What am I doing here?... I... er...  
I'm Mr. Bird's new secretary.  
Didn't you know that?...



I... no, I hadn't heard.  
Please excuse me, sir.



Hello, Nestor!... Nestor!...



Hello, Nestor!... A young ruf-  
fian's broken into the house!  
Stop him telephoning his ac-  
complices! We're coming at  
once. Don't let him get away,  
whatever you do!



Hello, Captain! I'm at Marlin-  
spike Hall... Bring the police!  
Drop that tele-  
phone, you!



Starlings bite?  
... Hello?...  
Hello?... Starlings  
bite what?...



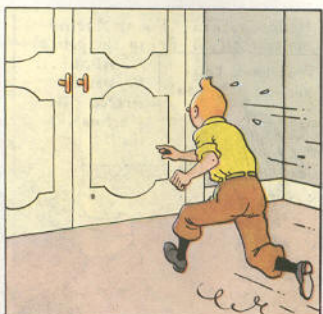
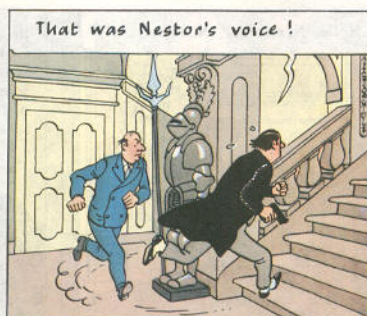
Marlinspike, Captain!  
Marlinspike Hall!

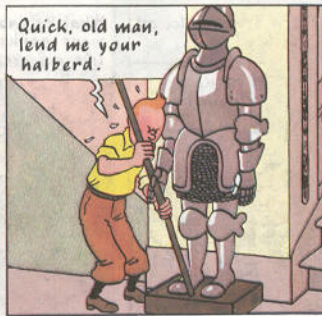
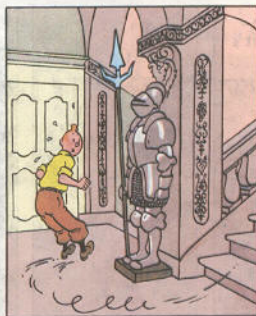
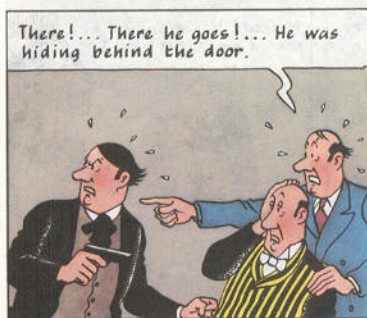
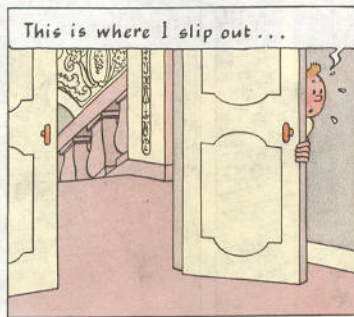


What?... Martin's  
bike?... Hello?...  
Hello?... Thunder-  
ing typhoons!  
What's going on?

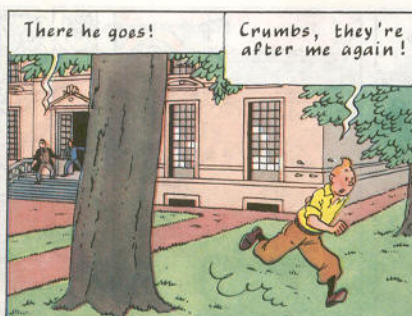




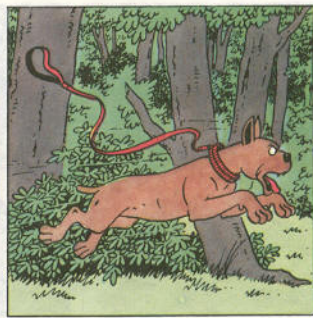
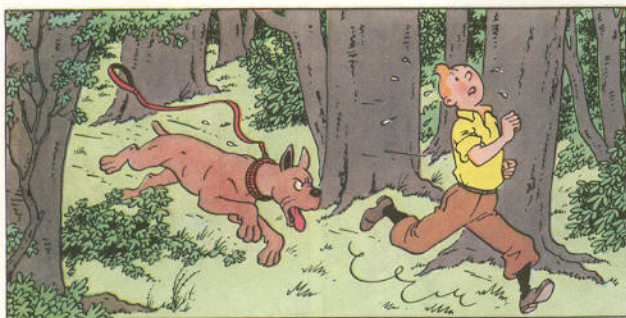
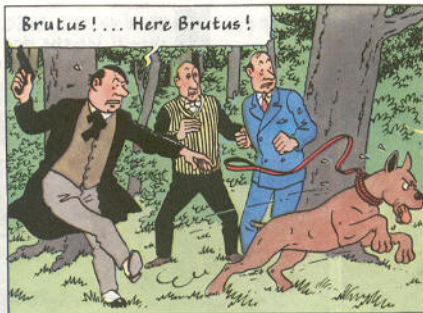














WOOF!  
WOOF!



WOOF!  
WOOF!



What shall I do?... If I run  
they'll let the dog go and  
I'll have them on my track.  
But if...

Yes, my mind's  
made up. I  
must risk every-  
thing!



We're nearly there; that  
barking isn't far off.



Whoops! That's it!



The joke's over, you gang-  
sters! Hands up!



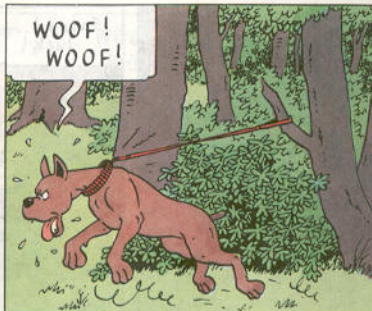
Now get up and start walking...  
Back to the house!



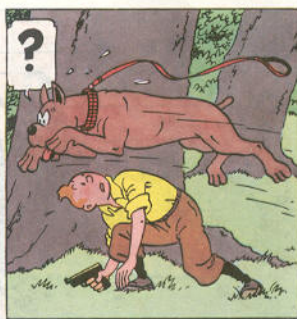
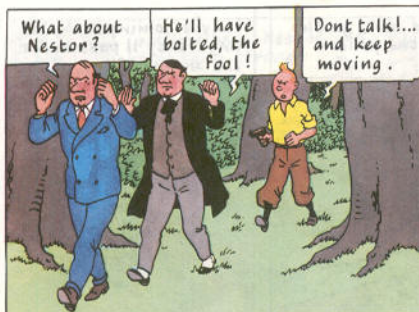
We can have a nice comfortable  
chat there while we wait for  
the police to arrive...



WOOF!  
WOOF!









Where are they going?  
... Oh, I see: that  
little wretch is taking  
care to put Brutus  
back in his kennel.



WOOF!  
WOOF!

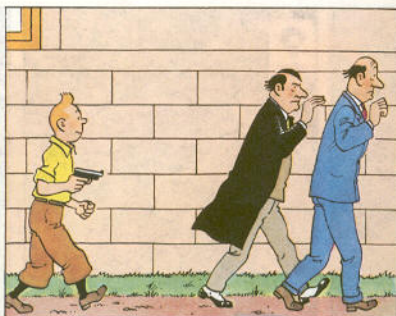
That's that! And now, gentle-  
men, we'll go to the police-  
station!



They're coming back this  
way: they'll pass under  
the ground-floor win-  
dows. Perhaps there's  
some way ...



Keep cool, Nestor!



Here they come!  
Careful, don't miss ...



Nestor!



Oh, dear, I didn't hit  
him hard enough ...



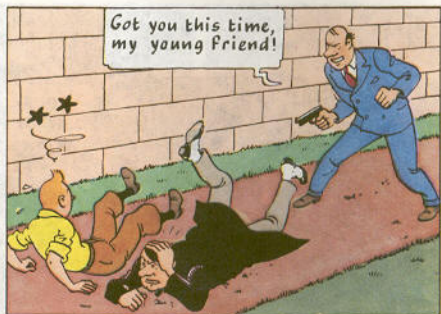
Now then,  
once more...



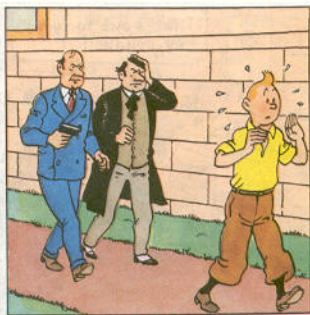
Oh dear!!



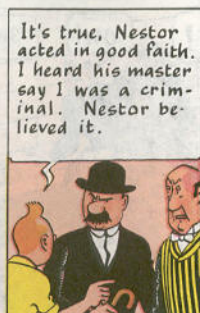
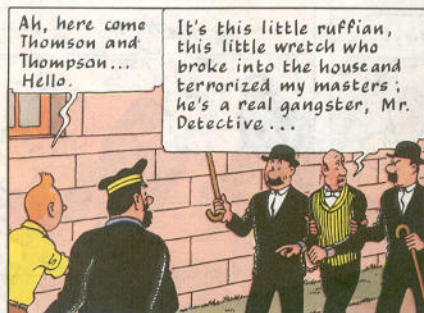
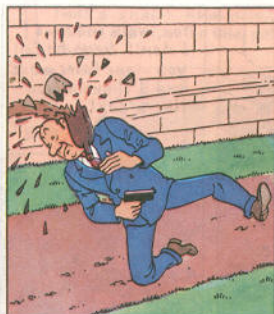
Got you this time,  
my young friend!



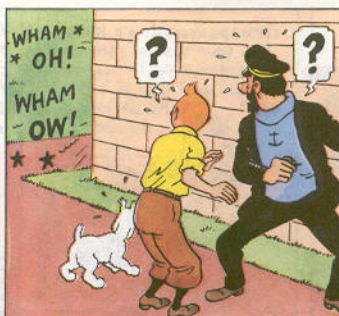
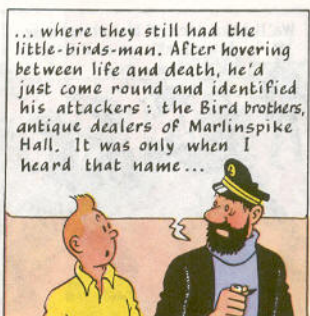




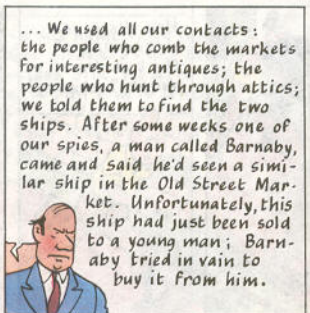
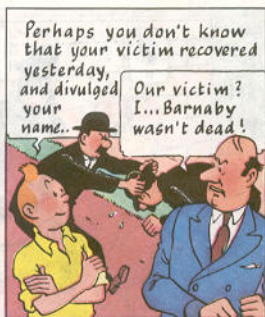
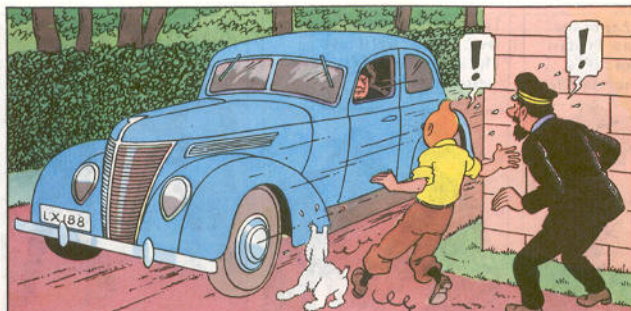












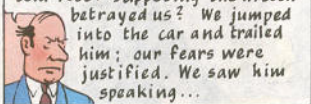


Barnaby came back empty-handed. Then he suddenly remembered the other man who'd been trying to buy the ship from you.

And next day he visited Mr. Sakharine, chloroformed him, and stole the third parchment...



That's right. But after he'd given it to us, he and Max quarrelled violently about the money we'd agreed he should have. Barnaby demanded more, but Max stuck to the original sum. Finally Barnaby went, furiously angry and saying we'd regret our meanness. When he'd gone, Max got cold feet: supposing the wretch betrayed us? We jumped into the car and trailed him; our fears were justified. We saw him speaking...



... to you. Panicking in case he'd given the whole game away, Max caught up with you in a few seconds, and shot Barnaby as he stepped into your doorway.

I understand so far: but tell me, why did you kidnap me?



We told you: to make you give up the two parchments you had stolen from us a few days after the shooting.

I see. But I couldn't have stolen them as I didn't know you existed! But I wonder... Perhaps it was...



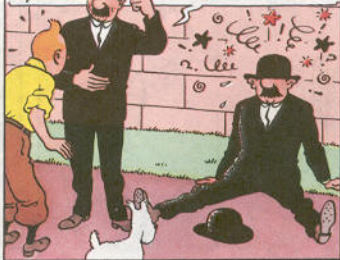
Yes, perhaps it was Mr. Sakharine who took the two scrolls?



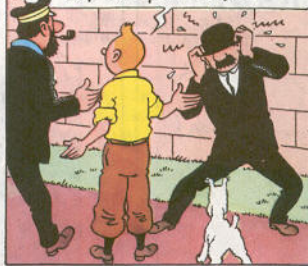
Hurrah! That's it!



At last! ... He's managed to get it off for me...



Come on, Captain. We'd better help this poor chap...



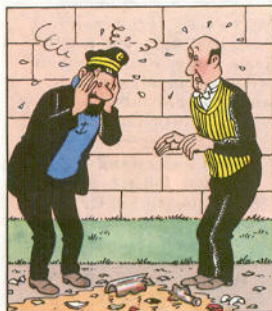
Ready! Steady! He-e-eave!



Whoops!







Captain, as soon as we return we'll see Mr. Sakharine. I'm sure he took the two scrolls ...

Yes, we've got one ...

One! Great snakes! we haven't even got that! The Bird brothers took it! But we can get it back!

Give me back the parchment you stole from my room!

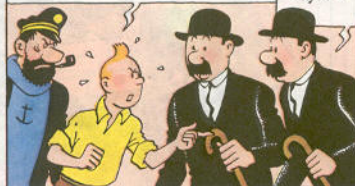


Give it back?... That's impossible... Max has it in his pocket!



Ring up the police-station at once, give them a description of Max Bird, and his car number - LX 188. Then we'll go straight back to town...

Right!



Next morning...

Now for Mr. Sakharine...



RRRING



Mr. Sakharine? He's gone away, young man. He won't be back for a fortnight.



He would be away! That doesn't make things any easier!



In the meantime I'll go and see the Thomsons. Perhaps they'll be able to tell me if they've found Max Bird...



Good morning. Are you going out?... I just came to ask you...

Sh! Mum's the word! Come with us!

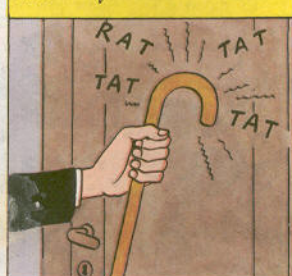


Where are we going?

You'll soon see...



...and a few minutes later...



Mr. Aristides Silk ?



I arrest you in the name of the law!

Arrest me?...?

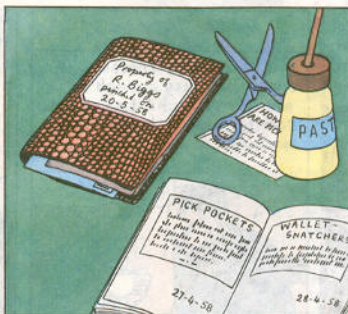


Yes, you! You are a thief, sir!...

A thief! Aristides Silk, retired civil servant: a thief! It's a mistake, gentlemen, a shocking mistake!



I'm sorry to interrupt you, Mr. Silk, but could you explain the meaning of all this?...



I... er, yes... Well, I... you see, I'm not a thief: certainly not! But I'm a bit of a... kleptomaniac. It's something stronger than I am: I adore wallets. So

I... I... just find one from time to time, I put a label on it, with the owner's name...



... and I add it to my collection ...



I venture to say, gentlemen, that this is a unique collection of its kind. And when I tell you that it only took me three months to assemble you'll agree that it's a remarkable achievement ...

It's amazing! All these wallets in alphabetical order ...



I wonder if by some extraordinary coincidence ...



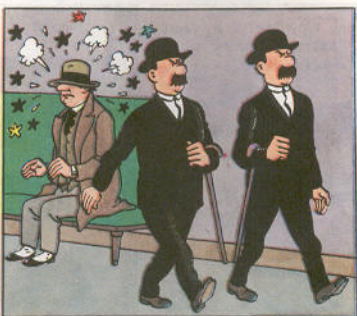
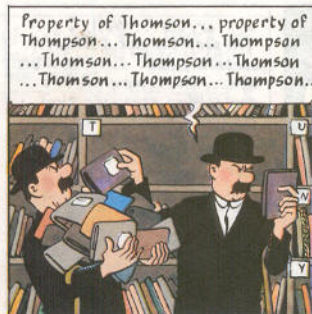
Hooray!



And here are the two pieces of parchment!... Captain, Red Rackham's treasure is ours!







Three Brothers joined Thra Unicornes in  
company sailing in the nooday Sunne  
will speak.  
For tis from the Light that Light will  
dawn. And then shines forth  
20 37 42 N. 70 52 15 W.

Three company will speak  
For tis from the Light that Light will  
dawn. And then shines forth  
42 1 0 the Eagles +

Free Unicornes in  
nooday Sunne  
Light that Light will  
dawn. And then shines forth  
52 the Eagles +

No! No! and No! You can go on hunting if you want to, but I've had enough: I give up. Blistering barnacles to that pirate Red Rackham, and his treasure! I'd sooner do without it; I'm not racking my brains any more trying to make sense out of that gibberish! Thundering typhoons! What a thirst it's given me!



I've got it, Captain!...  
I've got it!...

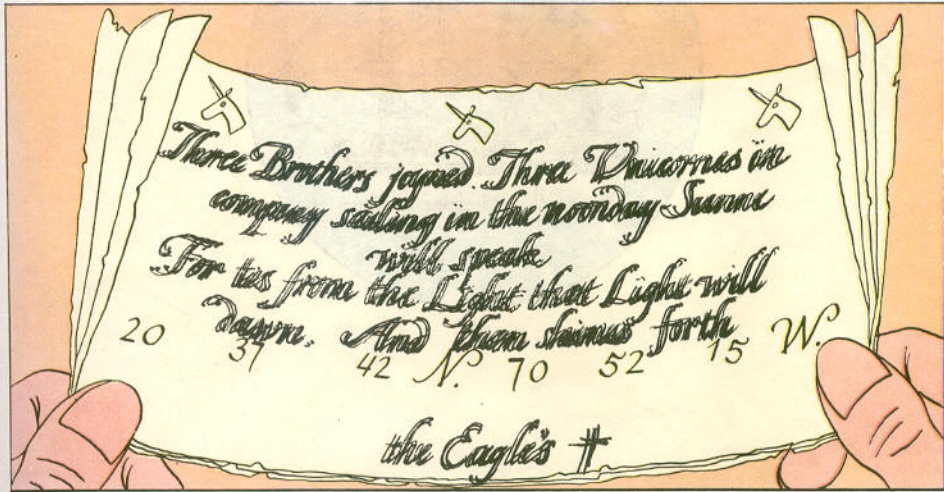


The message is right when it says that it is "from the light that light will dawn!" Look, I put them together...



... and hold them, "sailing in company" in front of the light. Look now! See what comes through!...

Thundering typhoons! The numbers and letters are completed, and it gives us ...





A latitude and a longitude!

Obviously telling us  
where the UNICORN  
sank!



Now, Captain... When do  
we leave on our treasure-  
hunt?

When do we leave?  
... Er...



Let's see... First we need a ship... We  
can charter the SIRIUS, a trawler be-  
longing to my friend, Captain Chester...  
Then we need a crew, some diving suits  
and all the right equipment for this  
sort of expedition... That will take  
us a little time to arrange. We'd bet-  
ter say a month. Yes, in a  
month we could be ready to leave.



Red Rackham's  
treasure will  
be ours!



But of course it won't be  
easy, and we shall certainly  
have plenty of adventures on  
our treasure-hunt... You  
can read about them in  
**RED RACKHAM'S TREASURE**



HERGE

